

Why Many Christians Get the Theological Concept of Good and Evil So Wrong

This week, I am beginning a tour of Israel, and our first stop after leaving Ben Gurion airport was to load our bus and head north to visit our first stop of the day, Caesarea by the Sea. What an amazing site, filled with so many wonderful archaeological remnants! As I walked through the amphitheater and the hippodrome, I marveled at the amazing architecture and the immense structures that we built under the leadership of Herod the Great (not really a great guy but a great builder).

The seaport that once stood on this site was a tremendous achievement, especially without modern equipment and technology. Yet, with all the size and magnitude of Caesarea, my thoughts went to the fact that Roman rule over the promised land was what made it possible for these structures and aqueducts to be constructed. Caesarea is just one of the many Roman cities that once stood in Israel.

This journey through this historic site made me remember again one of the most important lessons that I have learned over my years of biblical studies. It's a lesson that has for over 30 years provided a viewpoint that allows me to walk through or deal with some of the largest issues and problems. This single thought has allowed me to handle death, financial downfalls, loss of friendships and natural disasters.

Good things don't happen as a result of bad things or even to counteract bad things. Good things happen regardless of bad things happening. The evil Roman leader Herod didn't come to power so he could build an amazing city that would one day be the location of Peter's message to a righteous gentile Roman officer, named Cornelius, nor was the Roman city Caesarea

Philippi, with its multiple pagan temples, built so that one day Yeshua could ask Peter the question, "Who do you say that I am?"

No, not at all! G-D does not need evil to happen so that He can do something good. Rather, in G-D's amazing awesome greatness, grace and mercy, He works good even though some people perform acts of immense evil. In other words, G-D didn't require Roman sin to bring a Jewish redeemer to Israel and He also didn't need a Roman to sin so that the message of Yeshua would be preached to the nations. The promise of redemption being preached to the nations was given in covenant to Abraham. From the very beginning of Genesis, we are also provided the prophetic covenant promise of a Jewish redeemer for Israel.

I once heard someone proclaim that the horrors of the Holocaust took place because that was G-D's plan to re-establish Israel and without the Holocaust, Israel would not exist as a nation today. This is not only wrong thinking, but it also forces one to believe that G-D caused the death of 6 million Jews because He needed evil to take place to accomplish good. The truth is that Israel exists not as a response to evil, but because of the covenantal promises of G-D. Had the Holocaust not taken place, Israel would still exist because Israel was promised to be reborn.

So, as we view the remnants of the Roman cities that once stood within the boundaries of the promised land, we should rightly marvel at the magnificent structures that once stood on those plots of land. But, we should marvel even more at the magnificence of the absolute covenantal promises that our G-D provided in His Word. These promises are so sure and so powerful that nothing man could ever think to build, no matter how ungodly, could prevent G-D's promises from being fulfilled. By the way, this truth is absolute even when it comes to promises G-D has made in His Word to you. There is nothing you can ever do that would be so evil or so large that

your actions can keep Him from fulfilling His promises. {eoa}

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